DOCTRINE OF THE PRIESTHOOD

Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven. (D & C 121:45)

SEPTEMBER 1974 SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH VOL. 2 NO. 1

UNPUBLISHED ADAM–GOD DISCOURSES
OF
BRIGHAM YOUNG
1852–1877

Collier's Publishing Co.

Table of Contents

Preface . . . . . *v*
April 9th, 1852 Discourse — introduction 1
Wilford Woodruff account 2
Samuel Holister Rogers account 4
Hosea Stout account. 5
Excerpts from George D. Watt stenographic report. 5
Excerpt from February 19th, 1854 Discourse
George D. Watt stenographic report. 11
Wilford Woodruff account 12
October 8th, 1854 Discourse
George D. Watt stenographic report. 13
John Pulsipher account 38
Thomas D. Brown account 41
Joseph Lee Robinson account 43
April 25th, 1855 Discourse
J. V. Long stenographic report 44
February 8th, 1857 Discourse 52
Excerpt from October 8th, 1861 Discourse
George D. Watt stenographic report. 57
Excerpt from August 25th, 1867 Discourse
George D. Watt stenographic report. 57
June 8th, 1873 Discourse
David W. Evens stenographic report 59
February 7th, 1877 Lecture at the Veil. 65
Letter from Scott Anderson to President John Taylor 68
Trial Results of Scott Anderson 72
Results of Fred C. Collier's excommunication trial 73

Note: For a list of abbreviations and bibliography see *The Teachings of President Brigham Young Vol. 3, 1852–1854* p. 429–438

Copyright © April 1991
by
Fred C. Collier
All Rights Reserved

Second edition
printed April, 1991.

Original publication titled
Unpublished Discourse of Brigham Young 1854
printed in September, 1974.

Copies may be obtained
by writing
Collier's Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 1866
Salt Lake City, Utah 84110
or
Phone 1–801–848–5727

PREFACE

It may be honestly said that President Brigham Young's greatest contribution to Mormon theology was the Adam-God doctrine. Yet notwithstanding this, his teachings are ignored by the Church, and universally misunderstood by the general membership. No doubt this is at least partly due to the fact that Adam-God has become the focal point of tremendous ridicule by anti-Mormons, who for more than a century have employed it as a devise to prejudice potential converts and to destroy the testimony of unsuspecting members, who generally speaking have been either misinformed or altogether uninformed. This has tended to create prejudice against the doctrine and has led most Church members to shy away from it.

Some LDS authors have attempted to explain President Young's Adam-God teachings away in the belief that by so doing they were protecting the Church. But this tactic has only served to make matters worse, by adding fuel to the fire which has been kindled by the anti-Mormon press, as well as by Fundamentalists, both of whom have claimed as a consequence that Church leaders are guilty of deliberate deception and dishonesty.

Other would be defenders of the Church have argued that there is contradiction in President Young's teachings. They have done this in order to discredit President Young, thinking that by so doing they resolve the paradox and vindicate current Church leaders and doctrine. The fallacy in such thinking is readily apparent, as it lays the foundation for belief in the idea that the Church is likely to be misled, or led into false doctrine by the President of the Church, and this to, even when he claims revelation from God, such as is the case with President Youngs's teachings on Adam.

In the face of all that has transpired throughout the years over this controversy, it must be conceded that the best approach is an honest one — namely to carefully scrutinize President Young's teachings and let the chips fall where they may, knowing assuredly that ultimately the truth will prevail.

President Young was not a writer, and never did sit down with

pen in hand to compose or organize his thoughts in a comprehensive treatise on the subject of Adam-God. Nor for that matter did he ever do so upon any other doctrinal subject. The only record which we have of President Young's teachings comes from the many hundreds of his public speeches, most of which were stenographically reported, and also the minutes of priesthood meetings and councils etc., which were reported by his clerks, and different individuals who took minutes and wrote them in their diaries. The record clearly demonstrates that there were in fact many occasions when President Young mentioned the doctrine of Adam-God, both in his public speeches, as well as in private meetings. However for the most part, these remarks were not comprehensive addresses on the subject. Most of his statements were only brief comments dealing with one segment or another of the doctrine. Thus, in and of themselves these statements fail to bring the whole doctrine into clear focus. This is true with the exception of a few sermons wherein Adam-God was the principle topic of discussion. Three of these sermons were published by the Church in Brigham Young's day. Aside from these, there were also five other speeches which were never published, the manuscripts of which have recently been discovered in the Brigham Young Papers at the Church archives in Salt Lake City. The some odd 200 boxes of President Young's papers were finally catalogued during the mid 1970s by the librarians at the Church Archives who worked in conjunction with Leonard Arrington and his staff of assistants.

It is the object of this issue of *Doctrine of the Priesthood* to publish the text of all these speeches, both those which were printed in Brigham Young's day, as well as those which were not. The purpose in this is to make these documents available to the general public, that interested individuals might have the opportunity of reading and judging the matter for themselves.

The sermons which follow will shed a great deal of light on many of the "mysteries of the Kingdom." Not only so, but they will also raise a number of new questions, the answers to which will not be found in this work. This should not dissuade the honest seeker after truth. Indeed it is only natural that new information after being duly

considered will raise new questions and this being the case there is no reason to suppose that these questions constitute evidence to discredit the new revelation.

It should be remembered, that it takes far more space to answer questions than it does to ask them. A scriptural defense of the doctrine which follows would require a book in its own right, and now is not the time. Nevertheless, the speeches found herein do contain the fundamental foundation for understanding President Young's teachings on Adam-God. And even though all the answers are not to be found in the pages which follow, still they contain the essentials upon which intelligent questions can be formulated.

It would be incorrect to presume that the information contained in the following speeches represents the sum total of all that President Young has left us on the subject. There is considerable more information to be had, but as stated earlier, this other material exists in segments, and is widely scattered throughout many different sources. It was with the idea of publishing the whole body of President Young's teachings that I have, in other publications, organized all these statements topically, starting with fundamental concepts and after laying a proper foundation gradually working into the deeper doctrine, just as President Young would likely have done, had he taken the time to organize his teachings into a book. All this has been done with an extensive system of footnotes which reference each statement to its original source, as well as extensive cross references to more than a thousand passages of scripture. These works have been published in other issues of *Doctrine of the Priesthood*. (See *DP* Vol. 2 No. 2 for the first preliminary work of this nature, and *DP* Vol. 4 No. 3; Vol. 5 No. 1 and Vol. 5 No. 2 for a more comprehensive treatment) The contribution of this present work to those just mentioned, is that it presents President Young's teachings in the whole context of his own words as he originally spoke them in his speeches. It also makes available to the general public the whole text some of President Young's speeches and extensive extracts of several others which have heretofore never been published.